

**FRA Comments**

Comments on the last Idaho Rail Plan received from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) were directed toward the state's benefit-cost methodology and its application in the St. Maries River Railroad assistance project. The St. Maries rehabilitation effort was a long-term project and was performed in stages over several years. The benefit0cost analysis performed for each stage was the subject of an Amendment to the Rail Plan and the comments were addressed in the first amendment following their receipt.

At the time of the last Rail Plan, each state was responsible for the derivation of its own methodology which was subject to review and approval by the FRA. The FRA subsequently published a standard methodology for use by all states so that projects would be evaluated on the same basis and could be more equitably compared and ranked for the allocation of funds. This methodology, which was used to evaluate the assistance projects contained in this document, is the subject of Appendix A.

**APPENDIX D**  
**INDEX TO FEDERAL**  
**RAIL PLANNING REGULATIONS**  
**49 CFR Part 266, Section 266.17(C) and (d)**  
**as proposed November 30, 1990**

<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	<b><u>REFERENCES (1)</u></b>	<b><u>RAIL PLAN UPDATE LOCATION</u></b>
Objectives of Rail Service Assistance Program	c, 1	Chapter 1
Operating Carriers	c, 2, i	Chapter 2
Freight Traffic Density	c, 2, ii	Chapter 2
Service Description	c, 2, iii	Chapter 2
Lines Eligible for Assistance	c, 3, i	Chapter 3
Lines Potentially Subject to Abandonment	c, 3, ii	Chapter 3
Lines with Applications Pending	c, 3, iii	Chapter 3
Rail Projects for In-Kind Benefits	c, 3, iv	None
Screening Criteria	c, 4	Chapter 3
Benefit-Cost Analysis	c, 5	Chapter 4
Planning Process Participation	c, 6	Chapter 1
Transportation Planning Process	c, 7	Chapter 1
Update of Data	d, 1	Chapter 2, 3 and 4
Map/Description Update	d, 2	Chapter 2
Analysis of New Projects	d, 3	Chapter 4
Rail/Overall Transportation Planning Relationships	d, 4	Chapter 1
Public Involvement/Resource Allocatic	d, 5	Chapter 1
Agency Changes	d, 6	None
Policy Revisions	d, 7	Chapter 1

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(1) Subsection, paragraph, and sub-paragraph of Part 266, Section 266.17.

**SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE  
DRAFT IDAHO STATE RAIL PLAN**

**FHWA**

- Excellent document

**Montana DOT**

- Nice job

**Idaho Growers Shippers Association (potato shippers)**

- Well done; encourage continued updating of plan and adoption

**Idaho Farm Bureau Federation**

- The State of Idaho and commodity producers should initiate and maintain an aggressive, cooperative effort to provide competitive local rail service whenever possible.
- Support the development and implementation of strategies outlined in the Recommendations for Future Rail Planning as discussed in the State Rail Plan.
- Establish a Shippers Task Force to provide input to the Idaho Transportation Department and Transportation Board on rail and other transportation related issues.

**Idaho Barley Commission**

- We strongly support and encourage the development of specific strategies by the Idaho Transportation Board to fulfill the Recommendations for Future Rail Planning spelled out in the State Rail Plan.
- Conduct a statewide rail needs study as part of a continuous rail planning process.
- Identify and secure funding mechanisms to assist with critically needed acquisition (including equipment) and rehabilitation projects.
- Convene a Shippers Task Force to advise ITD and the Transportation Board on rail and other transportation issues.

**Senator Lin Whitworth**

- Idaho needs ITD to give a complete and thorough review of the rail transportation system in regards to service, safety and responsible actions.

**Idaho State Tax Commission**

- The draft is loaded with lots of helpful information and useful insights.

**Transportation Communications Union**

- We support your efforts to develop a State Rail Plan to assist in keeping rail service in Idaho.

**Carolyn Garder, Citizen, Idaho Falls**

- Railroads may very much be needed and not be getting the support they need to keep them going.

**Mayor Kenneth Walker of Lewisville**

- We are in favor of the proposal (the project on the West Belt Branch of the Eastern Idaho Railroad) which would provide increased and more expedient service and hopefully improved crossings in the Lewisville area.

**Federal Railroad Administration (verbal)**

- One of the better State Rail Plans
- More potential rail projects could have been analyzed in detail, but understandable due to lack of funding.
- The section on Lines Eligible for Assistance including System Diagram Map Lines should be expanded some (this has been done).
- Explain the rationale of why railroads abandon lines. (This has been done.)

**Federal Railroad Administration (written)**

- The FRA is pleased to approve the Idaho State Rail Plan update.

**Local Highway Technical Assistance Council (verbal)**

- Explain the tradeoff between rail and truck transport in terms of traffic shifts and impacts on state and local roads.

## **Port of Lewiston**

- Supports the plan
- There should be more flexibility in the use of funds for funding rail freight projects such as the rail facilities in the Port of Lewiston. An investment of \$100,000 in the rail facilities at the Port would go far further to increase the port's competitiveness than an equivalent investment in highways.

## **Charles G. Clark, Union Pacific Railroad**

- State and local governments are very unlikely to fund rail assistance projects now that the Federal Local Rail Service Assistance Program has been eliminated, particularly with the use of highway user revenue or local bonding mechanisms. State and local governments do not need to pick up the federal program because government is trying to second guess when the Class 1 railroads (and possibly short lines) make their decisions regarding capital investments and where these investments need to be directed. (Specific references in the rail plan's recommendations for the use of state general or highway user funds and local bonding were eliminated and replaced with a reference to creative financing at the state and local levels to best serve the state's future rail needs.)